

DLLR PROJECT BRIEF BRAC NEG GRANT

PURPOSE

In a time when the national unemployment rate lingers close to 9.5%, nothing can be more inspiring to jobseekers than knowing that thousands of openings are headed their way. This is the peculiar position Maryland, the District of Columbia (District), and Northern Virginia (Virginia) currently face. As U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) strategies make the shift toward military transformation via Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), the defense industry and Federal job markets offer a new and challenging opportunity for our residents. However, knowing we will benefit from BRAC means nothing if our workforce is not prepared. As such, the State of Maryland and the District have been awarded a \$7.6 million National Emergency Grant (NEG) to develop integrated approaches to planning for and responding to worker dislocations, while continuing to build an active pipeline of job seekers for future open positions. The overall goal of the project is to train approximately 6,500 individuals in the skills necessary to complete and submit a federal application.

This collaborative effort titled "MARC Training Response to BRAC: A Regional Training Approach" provides a tremendous opportunity to leverage the resources, expertise and regional relationships that currently exist between Maryland, the District, and Virginia. In addition to aiding our armed forces in the assurance of mission continuity during and after the transfer, we are confident that the services, outlined below, are directly aligned with the purpose and goals of this NEG. Specifically, we have placed focus on training skills for BRAC-related occupations that lead to BRAC-jobs as requested by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment Training Administration (ETA).

The grant the project operators are:

- Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
- Susquehanna Workforce Network
- Baltimore City, Mayor's Office of Employment Development
- Mid-Maryland Workforce Investment Board
- Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation
- Prince George's Economic Development Corporation, Workforce Services Division
- Montgomery Works
- Tri-County of Southern Maryland
- Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board
- District of Columbia, Department of Employment Services

A Regional Response

Our region faces a distinct challenge when planning for the workforce transitions that result from BRAC due the fact that there are both gaining and losing jurisdictions within our region. While the District faces a net loss in terms of workforce, Maryland will be the recipient of these and other BRAC impacted workers.

It is a recognized fact that DoD and its associated contractor trail play a large role in the economic growth and stability of the Washington DC-Metropolitan area, and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. In a report titled "Assessing the Impact of BRAC in the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board Region," realignment and closure events affect 21,537 workers. Prepared by the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness, the report makes clear the impact of inbound and outbound job moves of military, civilian and embedded contractor positions affected by the BRAC recommendations. Specifically, more than 6,300 of the affected workers are contractors whose positions are considered mission critical to their respective agencies. While many workers will relocate or transfer, BRAC decisions eliminate nearly 282 off-base contract jobs and another 2,749 service jobs currently located in Northern Virginia. Equally important are the dislocations affecting the District. For example, it is estimated there will be 1,472 dislocated personnel. This includes 728 individuals at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) and 744 within the Naval Criminal Investigative Services who are eligible for workforce development and transitional services.

To address this dual need, our strategy has been to provide a diverse range of trainings to suit the appropriate need of the individual jurisdiction. For the District of Columbia, in order to preserve the workforce of Walter Reed Medical Center and to provide continuity of mission and patient care, eligible workers are enrolled in a number of trainings designed to enhance their current skill sets and learn new ones to preserve their employment.

Services provided by this grant are as follows:

- Federal application/ resume assistance and training for job seekers
- Transitional Assistance to BRAC impacted relocating employees and families
- Continue training efforts for veterans and other job seekers
- Facilitation of outreach and training efforts for small businesses
- Hosting group events such as career fairs and lunches
- Continue current training for professional certification programs and implement new ones

Meeting the Needs of Maryland

For Maryland, the challenge has been increasing both the quality and quantity of clients seeking federal employment. As previously described, Maryland has had great success in attracting individuals to career fairs focused on federal employment and conducting overall outreach to increase interest in the federal personnel system. An obstacle that is consistently identified by both job seekers and federal hiring managers is the rigorous, and often arcane, federal hiring process.

In order to provide hiring managers with a better quality applicant and to provide job seekers with the skills needed to compete for a federal position, Maryland proposes to offer specialized workshops focusing on the requirements of the federal hiring process and how to best relate their knowledge, skills and abilities to the positions they are applying for. This training will be useful for many of the job seekers within the MARC region due to the fact that there are over 500,000 federal positions in the surrounding jurisdictions.

The immediate goal is to respond to the technical worker shortage for new and incumbent workers. This will be accomplished by:

- Providing job seekers instruction on how to apply for Federal jobs, including where they can be found and techniques to successfully secure those jobs
- Providing job seekers and the emerging regional workforce useful information on obtaining a security clearance
- Providing internships, STEM camps, teacher certifications and job shadowing
- Continuing to support the Maryland Transition Center activities assisting transferees, and their spouses and family members, in their reemployment efforts and being a resource for workers for resources and options available in Maryland
- Making certain that businesses receive training in how to obtain federal contracts including agency specific information and access to the various resources for small businesses. This will support the efforts of community and regional business organizations (Chambers of Commerce, Tech Councils, Regional Alliances, Ft. Meade Regional Growth Management Committee, etc).

The long term goal is to create, sustain, and maintain a sufficient pipeline of qualified job seeks. This will be accomplished by:

- Developing recruitment, retention, and training strategies
- Responding to the unique needs of military and civilian spouses
- Addressing career pathway identification for entry and middle skill Federal employment opportunities as we assess current workforce pool and incoming workforce needs
- Establishing partnerships with key institutions to coordinate a workforce response